TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

In This Issue

- For the most part, this issue is devoted to an exchange of rural experiences with and in other countries. On Page 1, Siegfried Palmer of Bonn, Germany, explains the rural exodus prevailing in Western Germany.
- It is Christmastide again! Virgil C. Hougen, a Lutheran pastor in Decorah, Iowa, asks: "What place does Jesus have in our homes and lives today?" Page 3.
- On Page 4, Pastor G. Cadier, a member of the Rural Commission of the Reformed Church of France, discusses "The Problem of the Generations."
- For a description of a modern French farm and its owners, see Page 5.
- An account of the second International Conference on the Church and Rural Life, held last summer at the Ecumenical Institute in Switzerland, and the travel seminar which preceded it is given on Pages 6-10.
- Mr. C. P. Abbing, a Dutch layman, and Dale Medearis, director of Town and Country Church work for the Disciples of Christ in the U.S.A., each discuss the problem of "The Farmer and Laborer in the Same Village"—see Pages 12 and 13.
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No. 120
December, 1956

Rural Exodus*

FOLBROOK LIBRARY PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

(An Impression of Western Germany)

S. PALMER

• If one wishes to reach agreement about the implications of the rural exodus taking place today one should first of all form a clear picture of the situation described as "rural exodus." Everyone who has listened to discussions on this subject knows that the various opinions do not depend solely on the mental outlook of the observers but also on the stage of social and economic development of the country concerned. It is therefore not surprising if completely opposing points of view are expressed. One may hear, on the one hand, the statement, "It is essential to leave the land." And, on the other hand, one may hear, "The rural exodus is a great misfortune for society as a whole." Both points of view may be justifiable in view of the social and economic development of the country in question.

In this paper I must confine myself to explaining the rural exodus in connection with the economic system prevailing today in Western Germany, but I hope it will help us to understand the problem of rural exodus in other countries and help us to discover ways of counteracting it.

Commuters

An exodus from towns is taking place along with the trend to leave the land for the towns. Especially in the great industrial districts, many workers gladly accept the inconvenience and waste of time involved if they can continue to live in the country—or to move there. In the highly industrialized society of Western Europe this process of "commuting" is constantly on the increase. In Western Germany, owing to the increase of motor-traffic, bus-services, motor-cycles, and small cars, it is possible for people living in remote country districts to continue to live in the country and work in non-agricultural occupations. Of course, some of them do try to move nearer to their place of work, but the predominant characteristic of the rural exodus to towns is the leaving of full-time employment in agriculture.

The Agricultural Situation

In Western Germany, under the present conditions of the boom in industry, this flight from the land shows the following features:

1. In districts where property has been divided into separate holdings —belonging mainly to small farmers —one sees fallow land or very inadequately cultivated land. In one parish (an extreme case) about eighty percent of the land formerly cultivated has become fallow.

2. The sons of small holders no longer want to take over their

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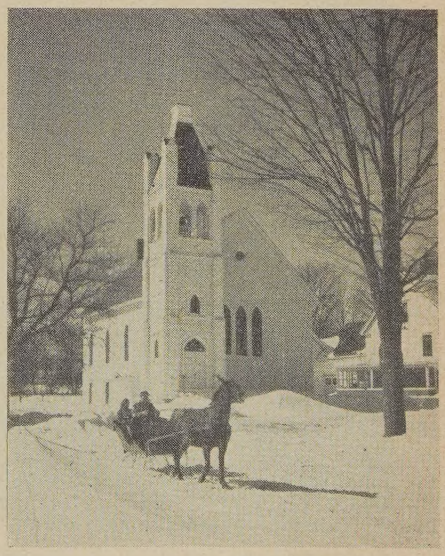


Photo by Eva Luoma

* Address before the second International Conference on the Church and Rural Life, held at the Chateau de Bossey, Celigny, near Geneva, Switzerland, August 28–September 4, 1956.

(*Continued from Page* 1)

fathers' land. They insist on learning a non-agricultural occupation. There are some farms run by elderly couples who find it difficult, for financial reasons, to employ outside laborers. These are what we usually call "farms which are running out," i.e., farms which will be broken up after the death of the present owners unless they are taken over by new farmers.

3. In one province, 33,000 people left agriculture in 1955 in favor of non-agricultural occupations.

4. Since 1953 the number of paid agricultural laborers has fallen by three percent per year. In order to meet this lack, seasonal workers from Italy were recruited in 1956, as they have always been in France, Belgium and Switzerland. This has helped to solve the problem of over-population in Southern Italy.

The above mentioned symptoms of the exodus from land-work in certain districts in Western Germany, where certain trends are perceptible in the economic development, were not apparent during the first five years after Germany's defeat. At that time the country was over-populated with refugees and evacuees from the bombed towns. But today, owing to the unprecedented industrial prosperity of Western Germany, accompanied by full employment (even over-employment), the standard of living has been raised and the significance and importance of an agricultural life has lost all meaning for many people.

"Counter-Movement"

But the picture which I have outlined would be incomplete if I did not draw attention to a counter-movement which is also going on. Not only among the farming population of Western Germany and among the peasants expelled from Eastern Germany (who were formerly independent farmers) but also among non-agricultural classes, people are ready and eager to fill the gaps made by the rural exodus.

It is increasingly recognized that the increase in industrialism necessitates a change in agricultural policy. Small farms which do not pay or which are inadequately equipped are decreasing and making way for larger farms which can support a family of two generations.

Were it not for this urge to take up agricultural work, even though it often means personal sacrifice, the Federal Government's program for the improvement of agriculture could not be carried out so promptly. It does not fall within the scope of this paper to describe the various measures which are being taken for the improvement of agriculture so I will only say that in spite of the industrial boom in Western Germany there is a counter-current consisting of people who would like to work in agriculture, mainly as independent farmers.

The Causes

Having described the symptoms of the rural exodus, I shall now endeavor to examine the causes underlying it.

The current explanations—non-agricultural work pays better; farming does not yield big profits; improvement can only be improved by rational organization of labor and equipment—all these explanations contain some truth. But we fail to do justice to the secret dissatisfaction of the farmer if we do not remind him that he has his part to play in the spiritual struggle of our time. We need farmers who know how to use their reason, without believing in rationalism. They must seek progress, but without believing in progress.

From this I deduce my first point: let us draw the farmer into the spiritual struggle, taking his problems seriously. Let us show him the real meaning of his life; then this farmer will not quarrel with his destiny or look for an apparently better life, but will fulfill his vocation, realizing its full importance. When he understands the spiritual problems of our time, the farmer will realize that life in the town has no more to offer him.

Patriarchal Way of Life

But the desire to live in the attractive surroundings of the towns with their ostensibly higher "culture" is only one of the motives people have for leaving the country. Another reason is the hope of having more independence in the town.

In Western Germany we have had to face the fact that the patriarchal way of life has lost its power and its justification. Unless the generations living on the family farm succeed in working together harmoniously, sharing the different responsibilities and creating a good atmosphere, the "family farm" aimed at by western agrarian policy will remain a mirage.

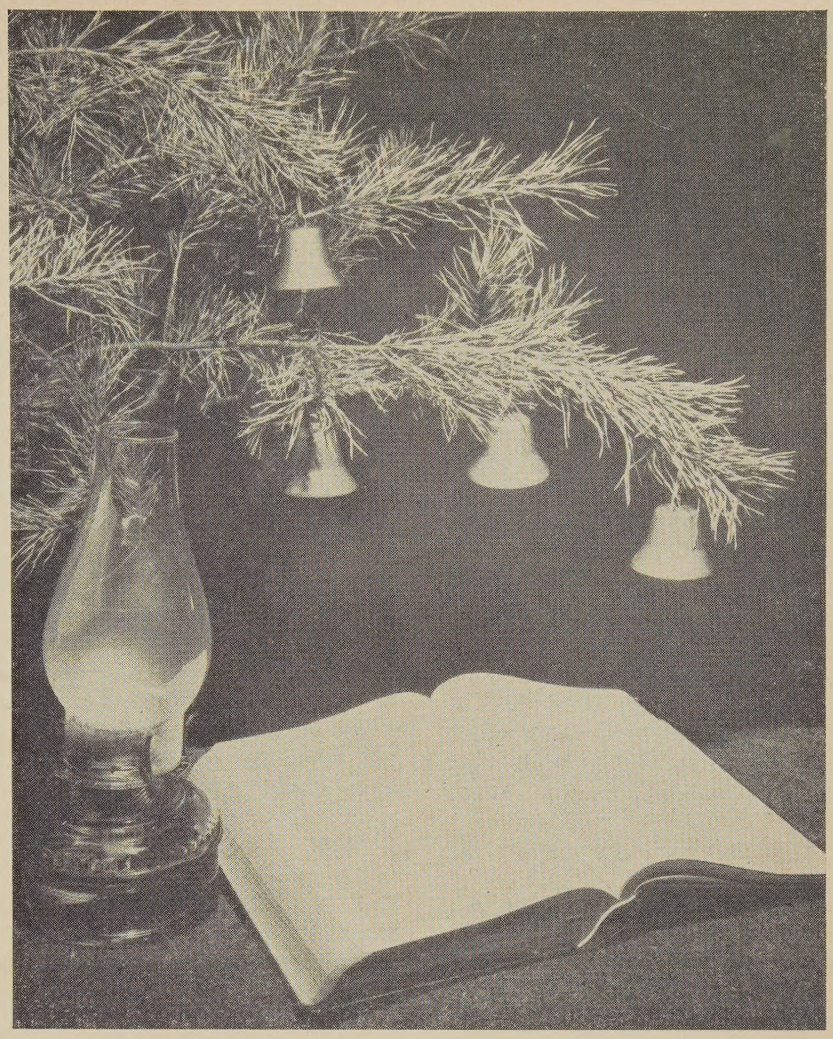
(*Continued on Page* 11)

German Countryside

No Place for Jesus

VIRGIL C. HOUGEN

"And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn." (Luke 2:7 RSV)



Winston Pote from A. Devaney, N.Y.

• The inn-keeper missed the chance of his life. But who are we to censure him? He possibly did not know that these were unusual people, nor that this was an unusual case. Or maybe he was guilty of turning away a poor couple because rooms were at a premium that night, and more wealthy people were getting preference.

Is that so different from modern hotels and motels who say "no" to certain tourists whose color or race or clothing are not according to "class"? After these have gone their way still searching, the VACANCY sign is bright again behind their backs.

There is no place in the bedroom for Jesus. There was a manger, but no pillow for his head. Someone has suggested that the stable-keeper found a twig of thorns where the baby's head had lain. Have you compared the stable with our modern bedrooms of tinted curtains, tinted sheets and pillow-slips, and matching accessories, a Sleepy Rest mattress with springs and more springs?

There is the bed-side table with books, but no Bible; with magazines, but nothing even remotely Christian among them. There is a clock-timed radio and an extension telephone. But the people in this room—do they read the Gospel? Do they take time for meditation? And the chances are they have substituted sleeping tablets for prayer.

Is there place in the living room for Jesus? This is the place we welcome our guests, where we show our best. We no longer live private lives. Picture windows look in upon the modern home, and we become self-conscious, mostly concerned about how we look to others. We are on parade. At Easter time we show our new hats and coats; at Thanksgiving we tell the size of the turkey; and at Christmas we count the magnitude of the season by the number of bulbs on how big a tree.

But what place does Jesus have? Is He merely incidental, or is He the reason for our Christmas? If He is not in the center of our living rooms, is He in the center of our living? There was an un-named inn-keeper in Bethlehem whom we have often abused, but have we praised the un-named family who invited Joseph and Mary and Jesus into their home to share it with them? Because we do read that at the time of the arrival of the Wise-men they were in a house.

Is there a place for Jesus in our dining rooms? Hardly have we released the tables from their burdens of Thanksgiving food when at Christmas time we again put on the turkey, ham and fish, four kinds of vegetables, two kinds of pie as well as cake, and add filling and stuffing until these tables virtually groan.

It seems as if Christmas, too, has become a great banquet, but is Jesus a guest? It seems a far cry from the table in the upper room that night before the betrayal when He offered up Himself. Here He is host; here He is central. But back again to our Christmas feast. We ask, "Who is guilty of leaving no place for Jesus?" and do we ask. "Is it I?"

The office, the den, the place of business—is there place for Jesus? "Business is business" is just another way of saying that money is God, people are unimportant, and God doesn't belong. The inn-keeper had a full house that night, and if we can read aright between the lines, the income was more impor-

(*Continued on Page* 11)

The Problem of the Generations: Young and Old Living Under the Same Roof*

G. CADIER

• In the sphere of family life, especially in the country, it is impossible to suggest ready-made solutions which are applicable in every case. We must rather fix some general principles which can be adapted to each special case and which may help rural people to think about their problems, and perhaps to solve some of them.

In the country districts of France it is the usual thing for the generations to live together in the same house and to use the same kitchen. The problems which result are by no means identical with those which arise when different generations live together in towns, because in the country living together not only implies sharing family life but sharing the same occupation.

The practice of living together is based on a traditional tribal organization of family and occupational life, especially on the authority of the elder over the younger members of the family.

Advantages and Disadvantages

There are many advantages in this form of living: normal family life can be maintained on the farm, assuring a firm social and religious basis for everyone. The experience of the older generation is always at the disposal of the younger; mutual aid is greatly facilitated; the general expenses and labor costs are reduced; the work can be divided in a rational way.

The disadvantages are also numerous: there is no privacy for couples; it is difficult to train the children, owing to the conflict of authority; and the responsibilities and resources are often badly distributed, nearly always to the detriment of the young people, who are thus handicapped from the outset.

The rural revolution taking place today is causing very serious disturbances in the balance between the generations. The life of the family is being modified because the traditional authority of the father is being questioned. The progress of mechanization in agriculture creates a need for specialized labor and for skill and material which is not always available on the farm. The lack of ready cash at the farm, due to constantly growing financial needs of all kinds, leads to disputes which impair good understanding within the family.

Tension

The practical consequences of this rural revolution are often disastrous. If there is no longer any authority within the family there is no longer any authority at all, for if the family is broken up for sociological reasons, family services become impossible, religious worship in the community suffers, and the authority of the Church ceases to exist. An atmosphere of permanent dispute leads to tensions which make life on the farm impossible.

For the sake of peace (or perhaps because of lack of ability to do anything else) some people accept a *status quo* which is contrary to common sense and to normal development. They then find themselves paralyzed in a deadly existence which offers no joy and no future. The young people leave the farm and the countryside, thus increasing the exodus from the country. Owing to lack of labor, the farm produces less. The countryside is neglected and loses its vitality—and so do the country churches.

Suggestions

Solutions to this situation might include the following:

1. The farm should not be divided. It should be retained as a single unit (if it pays), but the generations should be separated. The formula "two kitchens, one stable" enables the normal production of the farm to be maintained, while permitting each couple to lead an independent family life in separate living quarters.

2. The older generations should be persuaded to make their official family arrangements in good time: division of resources, wages, distribution of responsibility for the different jobs on the farm, bequests, etc.

3. The young people (and the older ones, too) should be warned of the dangers involved in living all together on a wrong basis, or against their will, and an attempt should be made to help them to find practical solutions which could be applied in their own case. Among other things they should be made to realize that questions of architecture, finance or practical economy can usually be solved with a little good will, and that they are less important than questions of a moral and spiritual order.

4. The young people should be advised to settle most of the questions of living arrangements before their marriage. The main responsibility rests with the girl, and this is the only time she can insist on rational living arrangements which will not prove stifling.

5. The role of the Church is to state the problem clearly and to explain it to rural people in such a way that they will realize its seriousness and know that solutions can always be found which are in accordance with the New Testament principles of community, wisdom and mutual understanding.

• Nothing is more needed at the present time in our theological seminaries than a thorough course of lectures on Christian polity in the light of sociology.

—SAMUEL W. DIKE, "The Problem of the Country Church," *Andover Review*, October, 1888.

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* From an address before the second International Conference on the Church and Rural Life, held in Switzerland, August 28–September 4, 1956.

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Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Mechanization and Specialization on a Modern French Farm

"The French farmer is reputed to be the best in the world. No other, surely, is more devoted to the land, more zealous in cultivating it. And if the whole range of crops—from string beans to exotic fruit—is averaged in, the French yield is still the best per acre, per dollar, and per man. But in the large field crops, the French yield both per man and per acre is less than that of Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, or Belgium. Based on small holdings and diversified crops, French agriculture meets with difficulty the competition of large, mechanized production."

• That comment written ten years ago still holds true. However, significant progress has since been made in certain regions and on a number of individual farms toward larger holdings, increased mechanization and crop specialization, and more use of cooperatives in production, storage and marketing.

Lierman Pere et Fils

The Liermans' farm spreads out over 1360 acres. Though they estimate the market value of their farm at a maximum of 200 million francs ($571,400), the annual gross from sale of their produce runs between 75 and 80 million francs ($214,280 to $228,570).

The farming enterprise is owned by a "family company," composed of Marcel Lierman, his son Roger, and his two daughters. "A good deal of capital is invested and we can operate better as an incorporated company," the Liermans point out. In fact, though, the farm is managed exclusively by father and son.

Marcel Lierman, a tall, healthy, deep-spoken man, is the son of a Paris industrialist. At an early age he decided to be a farmer, and studied at the *Institut National d'Agronomie.* "I, and others, became practicing agricultural engineers," he says. M. Lierman also serves as President of an industrial enterprise, and as an official of the large local milk and wheat cooperatives. On the farm, along with his son, he supervises the foremen, decides which crops are to be produced on which fields, and checks on the progress of various stages of the cultivation and harvesting. "It's important," he comments, "to get into the fields for a while each day. It's in the fields that you get the ideas."

Roger Lierman, the son, is a clean-cut, well-built young man who is devoted to the farm and farming. He keeps moving about the farm from dawn until dusk making sure that all goes well. "I used to ride a horse for supervising," he says, "then changed to a Dodge jeep, and now I have switched again to a Citroën 2CV because it uses only one-quarter as much gasoline as the American jeep."

His formal education was cut short by the war, when the Germans took him off to forced labor in Silesia. In the last stages of the war he escaped into Czechoslovakia, was helped by the Czechs to reach an American unit, and the Americans provided him with a car to drive back to his farm in France. In 1953 he was sent on an E.C.A. productivity mission to the United States.

At the age of 25, the younger Lierman was elected mayor of his village. He visits Paris about once a fortnight and does not feel isolated on the farm—"I have friends on the neighboring farms and see a great many people through our agricultural research center in Soissons." There is no TV set in the house, although he sometimes listens to the radio. Like Joe Moore, the 1955 Star Farmer of America, he spends his evenings reading the latest books and pamphlets on farm economics, and in keeping charts and accounts. He belongs to a group of progressive young people in industry, the professions, and agriculture known as the "Young Managers of France."

Crops

The Lierman farm has 484 acres of wheat under cultivation, 272 acres of sugar beets, 127 acres of alfalfa,

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The Second International Conference on the Church and Rural Life — 1956

• It was in August of 1953 that the first International Conference on the Church and Rural Life was held in Switzerland under the direction of the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches, with the cooperation of the Department of Town and Country Church of the National Council of Churches. Twenty-five Americans and eighteen Europeans attended the first conference and at that time they voted to hold another similar conference in the summer of 1956.

And so, after patient and persistent planning, the second International Conference on the Church and Rural Life was held at the Chateau de Bossey, Celigny, near Geneva, August 28-September 4, 1956. This second conference was attended by twenty-three Protestant rural church leaders from North America, twenty-five from seven European countries, five from Asia, two from Africa, and one from Australia. As these people from seventeen different countries gathered to discuss the topics of the meeting and exchange experiences in the rural church field, the idea was born for the establishment of a World-wide Rural Church Movement to find solutions to the problems that face rural people around the world.

Group attending the conference at Bossey

Preparation

Perhaps it would be of interest to know something of the process by which the Americans developed the papers which they presented at Bossey. Six topics were selected, which were sent to Dr. Rockwell C. Smith of the Garrett Biblical Institute at Evanston, Illinois, for him to develop in his classes at a summer institute for rural ministers. A committee of three men was then appointed to study the papers which came out of the institute and to draft the papers which were presented at Bossey. Thus, these papers represented group thinking rather than individual points of view. Members from other nations also presented papers on topics which were assigned to them by Dr. Wolf, director of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey.

It was evident that the Americans would need some preparation for an understanding of rural problems in Europe, at least. With this in mind, a preliminary travel seminar was planned. The group visited churches, communities, and conferred with leaders of church work and farm organizations in various countries.

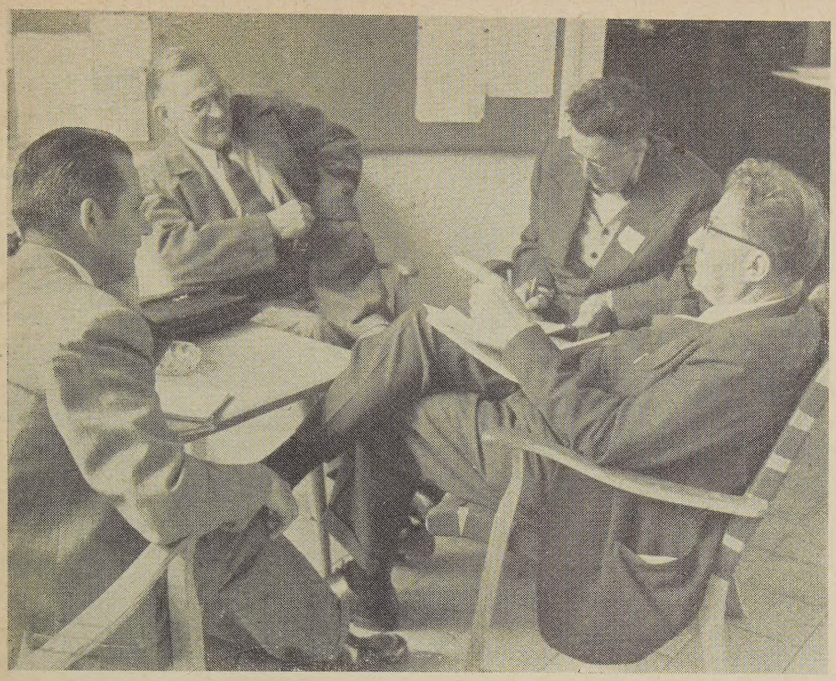
England

At Oxford we were fortunate in having a program arranged for us by Major General H. R. Lambert, director of the Institute of Rural Life at Home and Overseas. Among those who helped with our orientation there were the Rev. Ernest Sergeant and the Rev. T. W. Griffiths of the Church of England; the Rev. W. E. Farndale of the Methodist Church; and the Rev. R. G. Martin of the Congregational Church.

We learned that the Church of England (Anglican) is basically a rural church, but most of its clergymen come from urban areas and have their training there. The average salary is 500 pounds a year, or $1,500, which makes its imperative for a pastor to take on other part-time work. For the most part, he does his work without the help of lay leaders. Only fifteen or twenty percent of his members attend church.

In England, there are 13,000 Methodist churches, 8,000 of which are in country towns. For these 8,000 rural churches there are only 1,000 ministers—each having charge of approximately eight churches. The average salary of a Methodist minister in England is $1,530, plus manse, educational allowance for his children, and an allowance for car travel.

One third of the 3,000 Congregational churches in England are rural. There is no specific training for the rural ministry and there is a great shortage of ministers. There are, however, lay preachers who receive their training through correspondence courses. The salary of a Congregational minister is less than that



Four Americans talking about world affairs. Left to right: Richard O. Comfort, John Reisner, Raymond Miller, M. R. Zigler.

of the other two denominations mentioned.

Our orientation at Oxford included a ride out through the beautiful countryside to the prosperous farm of Mr. Walter Green, who rents his land from the Duke of Marlborough; an informal talk about English agriculture by the eminent agriculturist, Lord John Russell; a visit to the parish of Combe, where the vicar, the Rev. T. W. Griffiths, and his wife entertained us at the vicarage for a typical English "High Tea"; and a visit to Blenheim Castle, where Winston Churchill was born and where our own American Consuelo Vanderbilt lived for some time as Duchess of Marlborough.

The Netherlands

In Holland we were guests at *Kerk en Wereld,* at institute at Driebergen, near Utrecht, which was started four years ago by Dr. Jopie Eijkman, a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, to bring the Gospel to the people in every aspect of life—"to help the world find a way of real, human living." Thus, *Kerk en Wereld* (Church in World) includes a school of social work, trains youth-work leaders, social workers, evangelists, men to reach industrial workers, and men to reach rural folk. Their training includes theology, philosophy, sociology, psychology, group work and case work, in addition to practical training. No one is denied entrance because of his faith, for Holland is thirty-eight percent Roman Catholic and a large percent Jewish.

Another field of concern there is one of reaching people in their leisure time. A large wooded tract adjacent to *Kerk en Wereld* was purchased by the Dutch Reformed Church as a camping and recreation center for people of all faiths, and is known as "The Big Wood." Here families may lease land and erect their own cottages for vacation use, and here youth groups of all kinds, including Catholic, Y.M.C.A., and private, may bring their members for a week or two of camping.

Holland is a small country, but the people are industrious and there is no unemployment. More than seventy-five percent of the people in Holland live in urban sections. Family farms are decreasing in number, but there are many part-time farmers. We were shown the technical developments in making farms on the "poldoons." The housing situation is critical (as it is all over the world), and it is felt that Holland will eventually be "an urban country."

Among those who served us in Holland should be mentioned Miss Hebe Kohlbergge, secretary of *Kerk en Wereld;* Mr. I. Kippers, Foundation for the Development of Basin Soil Regions; and Mr. Dik Gesnik, who illustrated his lecture with pictures of the work being done to reclaim the land from the sea.

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Richard O. Comfort and Charles West confer at Bossey

(*Continued from Page 7*)

Denmark

At Haslev we were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Ved L. Christensen at *Haslev Landbrugs—og Husholdningsskale,* the Folk High School which they direct. This folk school is attended during the winter months by boys studying agriculture and during the summer by girls studying home economics. The girls were there during our stay and prepared and served our food, which was delicious. We visited other folk high schools in the neighborhood, with varying programs—one was a technical folk high school. The students attending folk high schools in the vicinity of Haslev number about 1,000.

There are two types of folk high schools in Denmark—the Grundtvigian type (named for Bishop N. F. S. Grundtvig, the father of the Danish Folk High Schools) and the Inner Mission, off-shoot from the Grundtvigian type. The basic difference seems to be that the Grundtvigian Folk High Schools place most of their emphasis on the humanistic side of their work while the Inner Mission schools are first of all Christian. The Inner Mission schools did not set out to preach exactly but to develop character by Christian influence, while observing the requirements of practical education. It is often said that "Grundtvig emphasied cultural things. Inner Mission stresses training or technical schools." But both types try to educate young people for life. In both types the young people are taught to think, to work, and to study. Our attention was directed particularly to the Inner Mission schools, for Haslev is the mecca of the Inner Mission schools. We did, however, visit the beautiful brick church in Copenhagen which was erected as a memorial to Bishop N. F. S. Grundtvig.

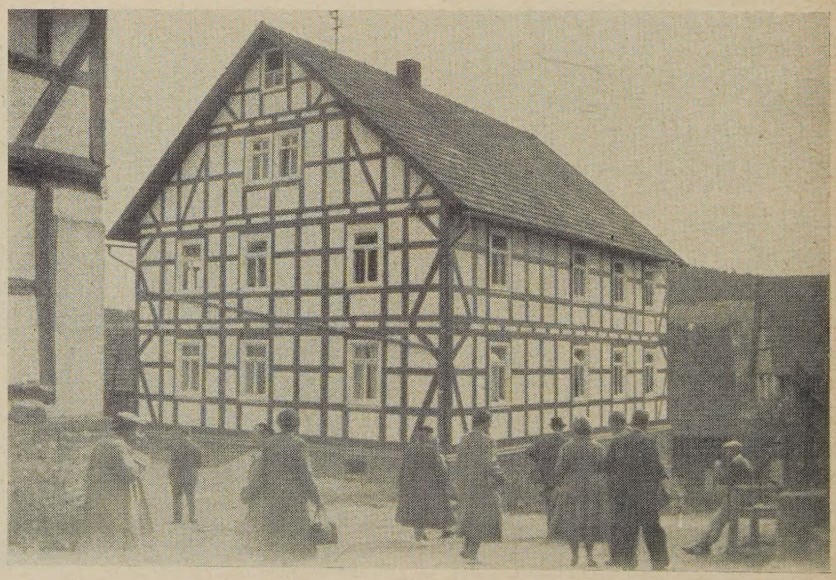
The churches in Denmark are supported by taxes. Ninety percent of the population is Lutheran; two percent, Roman Catholic; the others belong to what are called "free churches." All parishes choose their own pastors, but the government pays their salaries. As one pastor put it: "Ministers are chosen by the parish council but they are free to teach and preach as they wish, because they are paid by the State. In the city parishes, only three or four percent of the members go to church; in the rural districts, eight or ten percent go to church. In the churches of Denmark, there is practically no social life."

Germany

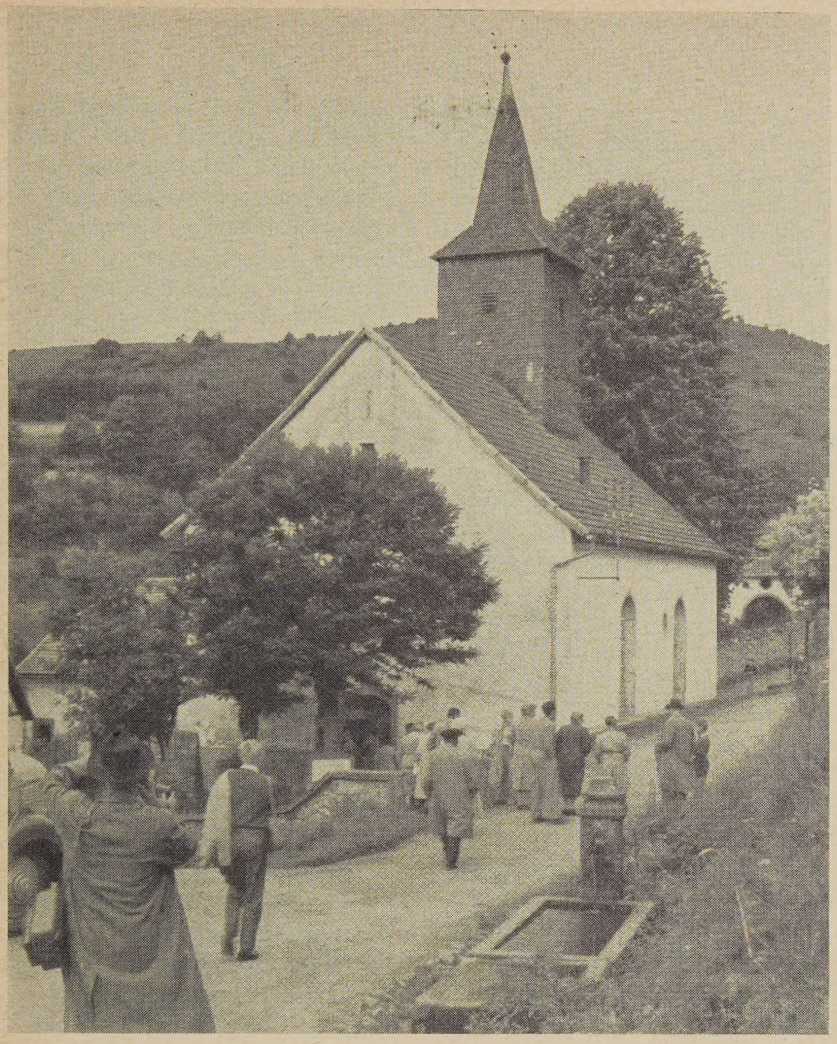
We spent five days at Frankfort, attending sessions of the mammoth *Kirchentag*—the Protestant laymen's rally, which is held biennially in Germany. The streets of Frankfort were thronged with people at all hours of the day—all going to the huge fair grounds where the sessions were held. Trams, restaurants and hotels were overflowing, but everyone in Frankfort seemed determined to make the visitors who came to see "the miracle of Germany" feel at home. The program at the fair grounds consisted of worship services, Bible study, six main "work groups," and special interest groups. We, of course, were particularly interested in the sessions devoted to rural church problems. Interpreters were provided for us, and this service helped us to have a better understanding. Also, there were so many English-speaking visitors present that a special Bible study group was conducted in English by Dr. Martin Niemoller. The *Kirchentag* seemed to draw a complete cross-section of German life. Each afternoon and evening there were concerts, organ recitals, plays, and special events from which to choose. But these four preliminary days were in preparation for Sunday, August 12, when a mass meeting was held at the Rebstock Airport. 300,000 persons attended this gathering and joined in singing the Luther hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is our God."

One of the most thrilling aspects of the *Kirchentag* was the presence of almost 25,000 people from the Soviet zone of Germany. It was a rare privilege to be able to sit down with a few of these ministers and teachers, to hear about their problems and how they are finding new ways for meeting them. Here are some of the things they told us:

"There is one thing that is increasing in Germany: the serving of laymen, and the *Kirchentag* represents the rejoicing of lay people to be together. It is feared that there will be no basic change in government, but passive resistance is strong in East Germany. . . . There are many people who are active in their church and love their church. . . . Many ministers do the work of thirteen pastors. . . . Churches in East Germany are supported entirely by gifts from the people. . . . Young



One of the buildings at Holzburg



Oberlin's church at Waldersbach, France

people love their church but ministers are discriminated against for working with them. . . . Berlin, however, has one church—no East or West—and money can be given to East German churches officially."

We left Frankfort by bus, visiting a work camp sponsored by the Brethren Service Commission; the "Schwalm" country where the national costume and head dress is still seen; had coffee with the minister of a Protestant parish in Holzburg; and in the evening visited the Brethren Sevice Commission headquarters in Kassel, where we learned of the Commission's work with the Student Exchange Program, the Heifer Project, international work camps, and its rehabilitation work.

On the border between West Germany and the Soviet Zone we visited the *Jugendhof,* a beautiful center at the top of a hill, where young people from East and West Germany meet to discuss their problems. We then visited *Fuersteneck,* a folk high school fashioned after those in Denmark, which serves on an interdenominational and interfaith basis. The buildings at *Fuersteneck* are about 800 years old and are nestled in a unity. This school does not give professional training but places its emphasis on general education and tries to train young people to use their leisure time constructively. When we were there young people were practicing chamber music.

We then saw Arnold Woida, who proudly displayed a heifer that he had received from the Brethren Service Commission, through its Heifer Project.

At Hannover, the Rev. Carl N. Mau, CRALOG representative and member of the Lutheran World Federation, met with us during the evening meal. Mr. Mau, an American, has been in Germany for six years, working for relief, and specifically for "Stewardship and Evangelism." Some of his statements about the situation in Germany, churchwise, are given here:

"The average pastor has 4,500 souls to care for in his parish, with perhaps 250 to 500 who are active church members." Mr. Mau said, "According to Lutheran tradition, all those who are baptized are members of his church—he will be called upon to confirm the children, marry all his members, and will probably have four or five funerals a week. His time is so full he has little time for anything else. The 'State' determines the number of pastors and their salaries. The 'State' collects from the people by withholding a tax of approximately one percent of their income. Every pastor gets the same salary, depending upon age, length of service, number of children he has, regardless of locality. The pastor is placed where the Executive Board thinks he should be, according to his talents. For a man of thirty-five or forty years of age, the salary is about 12,000 marks a year; thirty marks for each child; each physical handicap gives him more. The salary is increased regularly. He gets his parsonage and utilities free. . . ."

In Osnabruck we were entertained by Dr. Adolf Wischmann, who took us to see several nearby churches and parishes and to a productive farm of 280 acres which was founded in the year 800. The present farm house was built in 1792. There was an old stove in the family room covered with tiles from Holland and there was a chest dated 1693. Over one of the doors, carved in wood, was an inscription in German which we interpreted to be something like this: "Take care of the wood, for that is the foundation of security. It is easy to use an axe, but hard to replace. All of our labor and accomplishment comes to fruition in our de-

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scendants. Be industrious so that your grandchildren may be proud."

At Meppen (a Catholic community) we visited a Protestant rural church that was built three years ago from the sale of peat. The members of this church consist of farmers and workers in the oil industry.

At Stuttgart, we talked with Miss Elisabeth Urbig, Ecumenical Secretary of *Das Hilfswerk der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland,* who gave us many details of the conditions in East Germany and the methods by which the people there are helped.

One cannot complete the account of our visit in Germany without paying tribute to our German bus driver, Ernst Möpps, whose patience and good-nature were never failing, and to our interpreters, Miss Susanne Windisch and Mr. Gerhard Leiser. Without their help we would have found the language barrier difficult to bridge.

France and Alsace

One of those who helped with our orientation here was the Rev. Marc Boegner, President of the Protestant Church Federation in France since 1929. In his attractive office in Paris he told us that "the largest number of Protestant parishes in France are rural parishes . . . some pastors have more than one hundred communes to cover . . . rural pastors have little contact with their parishioners. The ministry is difficult because men are dominated by political convictions. They do not care to go regularly to church because to do so would incur the criticism, 'not a good democrat,' which means 'anti-Catholic,' because a good democrat in France cannot be a Protestant. The Protestant pastor finds it difficult to see the men of his church (they are in the fields or in the town) so they hold evening meetings in the farm homes when the men come in their work clothes. Salaries of Protestant pastors in France come to less than $1,000 a year, plus manse. This is very difficult for the pastor's wife, and the church regards her as a 'free helper.' Pastors are paid by members of the churches and all rural pastors receive the same salary, according to the number of years they have served. No special training is given for rural service. In France there are 44,000,000 Roman Catholics and only 77,000 Protestants. . . ."

In the Alsace-Lorraine section of France, we visited John Frederick Oberlin's parish and took pictures of his churches at Fouday and Waldersbach. One of those pictures appears on the previous page.

Ecumenical Institute

With such an interesting background the conference at Bossey was more meaningful. Part of the program there consisted of papers on the following subjects: "Rural Exodus—Yesterday and Today," by Sigfried Palmer; "Special Problems Inherent in the Structure of Rural Society in the United States," by Henry S. Randolph; "Farmer and Laborer in the Same Village," by Dale W. Medearis, Samuel H. Prince, and C. P. Abbing; "Generation Problem: Oil and Young People Under the Same Roof," by G. Cadier; "New Ways of Evangelization in Rural Areas," by Richard O. Comfort; "The Ecumenical Movement," by Dr. H. H. Wolf, Director of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey. The conference was not held for the purpose of producing a definitive statement but it was felt that it would be valuable to have a closer working relationship between the churchmen of various countries who are concerned with the needs of people in the rural areas of the world. This is reflected in the concluding recommendations which follow:

1. *To the World Council of Churches:* That its Assembly of 1960 include the Church's responsibility for rural life as one of its major concerns;

That through an appropriate department correspondence be initiated to help develop an interested rural fellowship within the churches, beginning with persons who have participated in the Bossey Conferences on Rural Life;

That the Administrative Committee of the Division of Interchurch Aid and Service to Refugees be urged to increase the projects similar to the Greek Team in areas where this program is needed.

That through its Department of Information and through similar departments in National Councils of Churches it prepare descriptive releases of the work done by such groups as the following:

a. The Department of Town and Country Church of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.;
b. The Institute of Rural Life at Home and Overseas in England;
c. The *Kirchentag* Committee on Rural Work;
d. Bureau of National Protestant Church in France.

That it encourage and implement the exchange of rural church personnel between the countries, including pastors, lay persons, farm youth and professors.

2. *To the Members of this Conference:* That they make a suitable report to the appropriate church bodies of its discussions and findings; and that national and local conferences be promoted to discuss pertinent aspects of the church and rural life, both at home and throughout the world, in order to develop information, a sense of responsibility and programs of action. That each member of the conference encourage his own denomination through the usual procedures to develop an interest in the world-wide movement, and through its representatives to the World Council of Churches give attention to the problems of rural people and churches throughout the world.

3. *To the Ecumenical Institute:* That since the two conferences on "The Church and Rural Life" have proven so helpful that it plan for another World Rural Conference to be held in 1958 (in June or September) with representation from Asia, Africa and Latin America.

4. *To Agricultural Missions, Inc.:* We commend this organization for its services to the rural church and rural missions throughout the world and urge an increased program of international rural conferences and training institutes, the preparation and dissemination of appropriate and needed literature and its advisory services to rural workers.

Rural Exodus

(*Continued from Page 2*)

This brings me to my second and last point: not only the sociologists but also the theologians should give up the patriarchal concept of the family and accept the view that conditions have changed and people are striving for different forms of community. To put it briefly: the family must guarantee the individual some life of his own. It should provide some privacy for the members of the family. It should provide for adequate housing. The laborer also wants some separation between his private life and his work.

I have described the psychological and ethical problems connected with the rural exodus. Of course, it goes without saying that the rural exodus is not due exclusively to material conditions. Nevertheless, improvement of the social and financial position of farming is one of the essential conditions for counteracting this trend. It is more important for the future development of rural society to discuss and to clarify the ethical-religious question involved in the rural exodus than to discuss the different measures of agrarian policy which aim at counteracting it. They can only prove successful if the deeper reasons for this trend are clearly understood.

Modern French Farm

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106 acres of potatoes, 73 acres of rapeseed, 64 acres of barley, 36 acres of oats, 43 acres of winter barley, and 21 acres of flax.

A good-sized garden grows vegetables for the family and the help, and plenty of fruit is provided from the orchard. For good eating, the farm supplies a year-round self-sufficiency. "Only the wine and the coffee is brought in."

All the wheat is sold to the local cooperative and all the sugar beets to the local sugar refinery, in which the Liermans own some shares. The rapeseed is sold to a local cooperative, and the potatoes go directly to the market.

Livestock

On the Lierman farm, 103 acres are set aside for cattle pasture and 68 acres for sheep runs. There are two sheep herds of 420 each, and about 750 lambs a year are sold for meat.

Thirty-five milking cows provide about 4,000 liters (1,000 gallons) per cow per year. The milk is sold to the local cooperative, and then the skim milk is returned and fed to the livestock.

The piggery, entirely up-to-date with infra-red heating and well-washed cement floors, turns out almost one piglet a day—well over 300 a year. Fifty to sixty steers are purchased each fall and fattened for the spring market.

Farmhands

The Liermans today employ forty to fifty full-time farmhands, mechanics and supervisors. In summertime, the number of hired hands is increased to seventy. (A comparably sized and cropped American farm would employ many less.)

Twenty-five to thirty of the farmhands, most of them with families, live in Lierman-owned houses in the village, at a rental of $1 a month. Says Marcel Lierman: "We have very good workers. Some of them have been with us for 25 years. They stay because they get regular pay increases, gardens of their own, potatoes at one-quarter price, grain at cost for their poultry, free electricity, a sports field, and other facilities and assistance. We have never had any trouble at all with our help. For one thing, they know that if there is any evening work to do, we're right there working with them."

Some 30 to 35 per cent of the farm's annual gross goes for labor. Marcel Lierman comments: "Our wages keep increasing, as they should and must. At the same tempo, we introduce machinery to help the employees work better and earn more. We try to decrease personnel five per cent and increase mechanization and wages an average five per cent a year. This gives us, of course, a real conversion problem in re-training our employees."

Roger Lierman said earnestly: "I think French farmers could produce much more if economic restraints were removed. Also, there are simply too many French farmers, and the vast majority of them have farms that are much too small to produce economically. Technically, farming is very good in France; economically, it is idiotic. One of the great problems is credit. It is hard to get. We must pay from 7 to 10 per cent to private banks compared to the 2.5 per cent in the United States and lower-rate governmental credit goes largely to cooperatives."

—Reprinted from *France Actuelle*

No Place for Jesus

(*Continued from Page 3*)

tant than the hospitality shown to strangers.

Business has been maligned for its commercialism of the Christmas spirit, and rightly so; but it isn't business as such that is guilty, but the greed of the human heart.

Someone has said facetiously, "There's only the cellar," but there is no room in our cellar. One can hardly get inside the cellar door. People live with such low thoughts, down in the cellar level with minds and lives so cluttered that there isn't room for clean thinking or decent living. We ought to drag all of this "stuff" out into the open and admit in His presence, "Lord what a mess," and make room for Jesus.

The story is told that when Thorwaldsen came to Copenhagen to place his statue of Christ in the king's palace they could find no satisfactory place to set it. There was only one place that seemed suitable, and that was the place of the throne; but no one dared to suggest it or to move the throne. But when the king came to see the statue he immediately saw the situation and unhesitatingly said, "Make room for the Master!"

Make room for Jesus!

—Reprinted from *Rural Lutheran*

Farmer and Laborer in the Same Village*

C. P. ABBING

• Holland is a small country but it has a lot of variety. It has a tradition of intensified agriculture and it is also the most densely populated country in the world, with an average of 800 inhabitants per square mile. The average farm in Holland consists of about twenty acres, but in the south many are only five or ten acres in size. Again, in the western part of the country, concentration is very great so that area is almost entirely a metropolitan area.

For many years the relationship between farmer and laborer was marked by a feeling of authority and responsibility. The running of the farm conditioned the tempo of work and life—not only of the farmer himself but of all who lived in the village, and particularly of all who were engaged in agricultural work. On the one hand, this meant long working hours and a meager existence. What the farmer demanded of himself, he demanded of the members of his family and of those whose services he hired. When we speak of the former bad working conditions, we must not forget that the farmer was used to subordinating the person (whether his own family or the hired laborer) to the work.

Transition

Since 1800 there has been a transition from an economic system as a means of subsistence to an economic system as a profit-making concern. In the Netherlands this change began when tariff protection against foreign produce was abolished. Instead of tariff protection, agricultural education and advice, credit unions and general cooperation in economic affairs was undertaken.

After World War II the rationalization of agriculture progressed still further. Bookkeeping and calculation of costs have resulted in bringing into the open the hitherto glossed-over question of wages.

The poor conditions of the past have had the effect of making farmwork unpopular. Many improvements have been made but, as a result of mechanization and industrialization, more and more people are leaving an agricultural career.

Solution to the Problem

In the Netherlands the question of equality of farm and industrial workers has been raised. We are of the opinon that complete equality between farm laborers and other categories of workmen is necessary, but it is difficult to attain. The farm laborers should have some understanding of the difficult position in which the farmer finds himself in this transition period, although such an understanding cannot be expected to have much affect. From the farmer we ask:

1. That he be just as ready to find a solution in cooperation with his fellow-workers as he was to deal with the economic problem.

2. That he carry out his farm planning with a sense of social responsibility so that as many people as possible are fully employed. This can only happen if the farmer discusses his farm planning with the agricultural workers or their unions so that the plans are agreed upon, and then announced.

3. That, after discussion with representatives of the agricultural workers' union, he feel himself responsible for the education of the younger farm worker.

From the governmental authorities, we ask that the price of produce be stabilized so that it is possible for the worker to earn a fair wage and be helped educationally, so that rural districts will not be looked upon as culturally inferior.

From the Church we ask that it take the responsibility for establishing an institute that can render the service of promoting discussions on the questions that arise concerning farmers and agricultural workers, and of providing up-to-date information on the subject.

* From an address before the second International Conference on the Church and Rural Life, Chateau de Bossey, Switzerland, August 28–September 4, 1956.

Dick Comfort to Pakistan

• The Rev. Richard O. Comfort, Executive Director of the National Council's Department of Town and Country Church, has accepted an invitation of the West Pakistan Christian Council to act as consultant in the establishment of a village church program in West Pakistan. He left New York on October 31st, stopping at Rome, Lebanon and Egypt on the way to visit village church work. He will spend three weeks in northern India while in Pakistan. On the way back to the United States he will spend two weeks in the Philippine Islands at the invitation of the Philippine Federation of Churches to act as a consultant about rural church work.

Dr. Comfort expects to return to this country in May, 1957. The trip is being sponsored by the Methodist Church, the United Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., with the full consent of the National Council of Churches which believes there should be more interchange between Home and Foreign Mission experience and personnel.

Prayer for the Rural Church Movement

• O God, who through the ages hast inspired man to move toward high ideals and who always hast been the life of worthy movements, we praise thee.

O God, let thy spirit brood over the movement that at all times it may express thy holy will. Work mightily through the committees, the agencies and the institutions dedicated to the enlivening of the rural church. Cause interest to flow as a mighty stream. Grant that the church may have new life and become a living part of thy kingdom on earth.

We bless thee for the rural church movement and pray that all who engage in it may remain in the way of light and truth. *Amen.*

—MARK RICH

Farmer and Laborer in the Same Village*

DALE W. MEDEARIS

• In the United States, we do not have village life as it is known in many other nations of the world. What you would call villages, we call communities. Our communities consist of village centers with all of their individual service outlets, for our farmsteads are built out on the land rather than in villages.

The industrial revolution has developed in the United States very rapidly. It has provided tools for agriculture. It has at the same time drained off the people and also made surplus tools for the mechanization of agriculture. It has, in the third place, provided a transportation system for moving the farm produce and has created a market for the farm products, so that in the United States we find a situation where industry and agriculture cannot be separated from each other.

Technical Advance

And there has been a very rapid extension of agriculture. Along with the machines there has been an attendant technical advance which has made agriculture more profitable. But this has resulted in fewer farm operators. It has also encouraged the growth of the size of farm operation and the number of farms. It is not only possible to farm more extensively, it is necessary because the cost of production has risen to such an extent that more extensive agriculture becomes necessary.

At a meeting of the American Country Life Association, about four years ago, I heard a farm woman say, "It used to be that we had one farm, for it just took one farm to feed our family. But now we need two farms for now we have a tractor to feed."

Land Tenure

In the United States we have a very easy land tenure pattern. Land has been looked upon as a commodity which may be bought or sold as is any other commodity. We have not had the emotional attachment to the land that many other peoples have had. This easy attitude toward the land has made it possible for land to pass from hand to hand much more easily as the situation demanded. Of course, it has also brought problems—such as exploitation.

One of the results of this easy land tenure pattern has been that of a heterogeneous society. What do I mean by a heterogeneous society? Just this: that people no longer have the same occupation or ideas. They no longer have the same sets of values by which they live. They no longer have the same cultural orientation. It has become a complex society with diverse sets of values. This has resulted in the creation of some serious tensions between peoples. It has resulted in a power struggle between old-timers and the new-comers. It has resulted in a serious lack of communication between farming people and those who work in industry, and this has intensified the tensions. This lack of communication has caused emotional blocks which have kept people from working out a solution to their problems.

The church exists as a voluntary institution. Many of our churches have adult membership which is on the basis of personal decision rather than family decision. The church exists as a social institution and as such it participates in the tensions and struggles in the community. Not only this, but it sometimes actually adds to the tension and power struggle in the community. Some of our villages will have from seven to ten little churches with small memberships. Sometimes there is serious competition in small villages.

What is the role of the church under these circumstances? Should the church insist on its own prerogatives or should it lose itself and seek to ameliorate these problems and serve as conciliator? I have a personal feeling that the role of the church is that of an arbitrator, indeed a redeemer in the matters of such a society. It should help peo-

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Dale Medearis addresses the conference at Bossey

* From an address before the second International Conference on the Church and Rural Life, held in Switzerland, August 28–September 4, 1956.

(*Continued from Page* 13)

ple to find a common ground of understanding. It should stand as a propitiator between the farmer on one hand and the industrial worker on the other hand. I wonder if the church could not act as a stimulator of discussions on the problems of community. Or can it not be possible for the church to enter into the very struggle and be a citizen?

Several years ago a study was made in Montana where enmities and struggles were resolved through group discussions.

Secularism and Materialism

A second result of the easy land tenure pattern in the United States is the rise of secularism and materialism. I am using the term "secularism" here as meaning a lack of the recognition of God in life. I am defining "materialism" as meaning the elevating of material goods above other values.

Under primitive conditions it was easier for farmers to see God in their work, but since advanced mechanization has taken place it is very difficult to see God in their work. Before communication became so developed in America, material values did not matter so much as they do now. But since we have had good communications between rural and urban peoples—such as advertising, radio, and television—it brings what I have termed "materialism" in our midst.

The Church's Role

What is the role of the church? Could it be that the church could serve as an interpreter of life? Could it be that the church could interpret God to rural life? Could it help the farmer to find his destiny and feel that he has a real role to play in the whole social structure and a role to play in the plans of God? Can the church help the people to feel that they really fit into the stream of things?

Man can come to see his work as a sacrament. This is difficult for the church, but the church must see the whole situation. For this reason, in the United States the Church has done a great deal to relate God to life. Here are three types of things that we have done: 1) There have been high-level national conferences to help define rural life and its relation to urban life—conferences at which theologians and agriculturists have sat together. These conferences have resulted in published material: a) *Town and Country Churches and Family Farming,* by Marshall Harris and Joseph Ackerman; b) a pamphlet, *A Protestant Program for the Family Farm;* c) another report, *Christian Stewardship of the Land.*

The second type of activity has been to carry on annually a discussion of these matters in our National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country.

And thirdly, each spring, under the auspices of the Department of the Church and Economic Life of the National Council of Churches, a conference is held in Washington, D. C. on the subject, "The Christian Farmer and His Government." This conference is very helpful to clergymen as well as to farmers as it interprets the relation of agriculture to life.

Such activities also help to relate theology to life. As pastors become better informed they are able to assist in helping to relate God to all of life.

Farming as a Vocation

The third result of our land tenure pattern is the growing difficulty of young people to enter into farming as a vocation. In the United States it is becoming very difficult for young people to begin farming. In sections of the United States where land is most expensive, it is virtually impossible to buy a farm. One must be a son of a farmer or marry a farmer's daughter in order to have a farm of one's own. Land is very expensive and it takes so much machinery that the capital investment is prohibitive. The investment often averages $1,000 per acre. When you have a farm of 160 to 320 acres, it represents a sizeable capital investment. This means that young people must have tremendous capital assets or tremendous credit. Under our inheritance system all of the heirs share equally in the estate. This means that the son of a farmer must not only buy the farm from his father but he must also pay off his brothers and sisters for their share. This system encourages wealthy businessmen, corporations, etc., to buy the land and operate it as an absentee landlord and have it as a hobby rather than for farming people to possess the land.

The Church is quite concerned that this is happening. The National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.'s Department of Town and Country Church appointed a committee to look into this matter. This committee is called the Land Tenure Committee. Dr. M. R. Zigler was the first chairman of this committee and gave it vigorous and able leadership for many years. This committee is made up of churchmen, but it has as consultants and advisors men from governmental agencies so that we have a close relationship of church and agencies. The committee has tried to promote the holding of short institutes on The Church and the Family Farm. Its intent is to establish social justice and it stresses the belief that Christianity has to do with all of life—there is no separation of church and life. Christianity must be related into living terms.

Legend of The Christmas Rose

• When Jesus was born in the little town of Bethlehem, there came Wise Men from the East bearing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

A little shepherdess, watching from afar, wept because she had no gift to offer the Christ Child.

As her tears fell to the ground flowers sprang up, which the child gathered and hastened to bring to the infant.

In adoration, she knelt at the crib, so Jesus could see the flowers, and when His blessed little hands touched the flowers, a delicate pink appeared in the center of each one.

And so a flower that never bloomed before came into existence—the Christmas Rose.

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Hough, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Beetle, Lester Fox	Jan.	13

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Hyslop, Ralph D., The Gift and Growth of Unity	Oct.	14
Indiana holds first Convocation of Town and Country Churches, Lonnie Hass	Feb.	14
In-Service Training—List of Institutes	May	16
Interdenominational Rural Church Programs, Benson Y. Landis	Oct.	1-12
JAMISON, William G.		
Criteria for an Effective Questionnaire	Feb.	5
Oakville's Churches	April	4
Rural Church Educational Program	May	12
Keble, John, Benson Y. Landis	May	5
Key to Survival, Mrs. H. R. Hackler	Sept.	10
LaFarge, the Rev. John	Jan.	12
LANDIS, Benson Y		
Bailey, Liberty Hyde	April	9
Credit Unions among Church Members	Sept.	12
Hearst, James	Feb.	8
History of National Interdenominational Rural Church Programs	Oct.	1-12
Keble, John—"The Christian Year"	May	5
Markham, Edwin's Social and Religious Passion	May	8
Robinson's Tilbury Town	March	5
Sandburg: the Lincoln of our Poets	Nov.	5
Small-Plot Gardening	May	11
Thoreau, Henry David	Sept.	5
White, Gilbert in Selborne	April	11
Whittier, John Greenleaf	Jan.	3
Wilson, Warren on the Open Country Church	Feb.	13
Lee, Charles, Serving Scattered Churches by Air	Jan.	16
LOCAL CHURCH PROJECTS		
At a New Hampshire Church	May	10
Fisherman's Sunday at Ely, Minn.	April	12
From Mapleton, Minn.	May	13
Good Friday Commemoration in California	March	12
Lowdermilk, Walter C. on Land Conservation	March	15
Maine Sea Coast Mission, Tertius Van Dyke	Jan.	1
Markham, Edwin—Social and Religious Passion, Benson Y. Landis	May	8
Matthew, John C., "As Ye Sow, So Shall Ye Reap"	May	7
Mennonites—Co-ops Help Success in Manitoba	Sept.	4
Message to the Churches (excerpts from statement adopted by the Third National Study Conference on the Church and Economic Life	Sept.	7
Methodist Church considers the Land	March	15
Mississippi State College Institute for Town and Country Leaders	April	14
Moomaw, Ira W., The Gospel and Village Life	Feb.	6
Morauski, Robert, An Easter Sermon	April	1
Mother, by H. W. Hurt	May	3
A Creed, Mary Keifer Nace	May	3
Murray, Charles R., United Effort in Oklahoma	Nov.	1
NATIONAL GRANGE		
Harrison County, Indiana	March	13
Easter At Troy, Maine, Mildred H. Kelley	Sept.	14
Nebraska School for Community Living	Feb.	7
New York Council of Churches' Progress Report	March	10
Novotny, Daniel, Benediction	Jan.	4
Pine Mountain Institute	May	4
Oklahoma United Effort, Charles R. Murray	Nov.	1
Pine Mountain Institute announcement	May	4
POETRY		
God of the Fertile Fields, Georgia Harkness	March	7
Gospel According to You (anonymous)	Sept.	4
Key	Feb.	13
Our Beloved Countryside, Esther Cushman Randall	May	4
Spring Winds, Marvin L. Vangilder	April	11
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For a Cooperative Society, Mark Rich	Sept.	13
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Indian Prayer	Jan.	15
Prayer, Hilda L. Ives	March	15
Spring, Mark Rich	May	6
September, Samuel R. Guard	Sept.	4
Thanksgiving	Nov.	2
Presbyterian—Cumberland Rural Minister of the Year	Sept.	6
President's Message to Congress on Farm Program	March	11
RADIO–TELEVISION		
It's Town and Country Time, Oscar E. Engebretson	Sept.	1
Religious Workshops	Sept.	8
Randolph, Henry S., Advantages of the Larger Parish	Jan.	6
Rural Festivals	Sept.	4
The Rural Church Today Faces Tomorrow	Feb.	1
The Too Small Church	March	4
Rapking, Aaron H., The Heart of Nature	Jan.	15
Rich, Mark, Family Night in Town and Country	May	1
Churches	Nov.	3
Churches in Review	Sept.	9
Historical Directory of National Denominational Departments of Town and Country Church Work	Oct.	13
Robinson, Edwin Arlington, Benson Y. Landis	March	5
Sandburg: the Lincoln of our Poets, Benson Y. Landis	Nov.	5
Schendel, Floren F., Fishermen's Sunday	April	12
Sherman, Jeanie F., Serving Sparsely Populated Areas	Feb.	10
Sibelius at 90	Feb.	6
Small-Plot Gardening, Benson Y. Landis	May	11
Social Security	Nov.	8
Southern Mountain Council	May	13
SPARSELY POPULATED AREAS		
Charles Lee	Jan.	16
Jeanie Sherman	Feb.	10
Ralph W. Chamberlain	Feb.	11
Steinmetz, Philip G., What do you Expect from Lent?	Feb.	9
Theological Statement, Charles E. Fuller	Sept.	1
Thoreau, Henry David, Benson Y. Landis	Sept.	5
Tuskegee Honors Rural Pastors	April	13
Van Dyke, Tertius, A Mission in Maine	Jan.	
Vermont farmers, Harry Hamilton	Nov.	11
Washington, George—Early Conservationist	March	
Welfare Services in the Rural Church	Jan.	
White, E. B.	March	14
White, Gilbert in Selborne, Benson Y. Landis	April	11
Whittier, John Greenleaf, Benson Y. Landis	Jan.	
Wilson, Warren on the Open Country Church, Benson Y. Landis	Feb.	1
Wyker, James D., You Can Do It Too	Jan.	

Convocation Notes

The January issue of TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH will contain notes on the National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country, held St. Louis, Missouri, October 16-18, 1956.

The printed report of the 1956 Convocation will entitled, "New Horizons for Town and Country Churches." It will contain full text of the addresses and summarizations of the deliberations of the discussion groups. It will be ready for distribution early in January.